Lanterns. In some parts of the country this is a very gay occasion. Huge paper dragons are carried about the streets, each draped over several men. In the evening lanterns of many shapes and kinds are displayed by the populace. There is also the inevitable firecracker—so widely employed on occasions of jollification and worship.

Ch'ing Ming has been the chief spring festival. It has especially been a time for commemorating the dead—a sort of "Memorial Day"—by repairing and cleaning graves and placing offerings before the ancestral tablets and on the tombs. It is also incidentally for picnicking and feasting. Recent changes have altered it but little, if at all—although the modern schools have in places attempted to graft on it an Arbor Day.

What has been regarded as the opening of summer has been popularly observed, although not so prominently as some of the other great days of the year.

The Dragon Boat festival, on the fifth day of the fifth moon, may originally have been associated with the summer solstice and have been for the purpose of obtaining rain. It certainly had for one of its objectives assistance in harmonizing the *yin* and the *yang.* The *yang* increases between the winter and the summer solstice. With the advent of the latter, the *yin* begins to grow in power. Precautions are therefore taken against evil spirits, particularly those which cause disease, by cleansing the home, especially by hanging up herbs and by drinking a specially prepared wine and sprinkling the house with it. In many parts of the country a favorite public event of the day has been races between "dragon-boats." The craft are long and narrow

and at the bow each has a dragon's head. In theory the contests are commemorative of the search for the dead body of Ch'u Yuan, a statesman, it will be recalled, who is reputed to have committed suicide by drowning in the third century before Christ, but it seems highly probable that the custom had its origin quite independently of that event.

On the seventh day of the seventh month is the festival of the weaver maid and the herdsman. The story told in connection with it is that the weaver maid (who is identified with Vega and two other stars) and the herdsman (identified with three stars in Aquila) so neglected their respective duties after their marriage